

# THE FREE PRESS HERALD.

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## THE Free Press Herald.

W. L. T. PRINCE & J. R. MALLOY, EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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Of every description, done with neatness and dispatch at this office.

## POLITICAL.

### LETTER OF

Mon. Thos. G. Pratt,

TO THE WHIGS OF MARYLAND.

In response to the communications received from many of my brother Whigs, I deem it my privilege, in this manner, to counsel with all in relation to the course which patriotism and duty would seem to indicate as proper in the present political crisis.

No lover of his country whose judgment is unbiased by party zeal and uncontrolled by Northern or Southern fanaticism can fail to see and deprecate the pending danger to the Union.

The first duty of every man who loves his country and her institutions is to provide for their safety. The life of the nation is in danger. It must be saved; then, and not till then, will it be permissible to us to discuss our differences of opinion upon minor subjects.

I say that the life of the Union is in danger, because, for the first time in our history, a party has been formed composed exclusively of citizens of one section of the country, bound together by the single bond of an alliance for offensive warfare against the other section. That the success of such a party would imperil the Union has been recently demonstrated by an address of Mr. Fillmore, and will, it is submitted, be apparent to all who will bestow a moment's consideration upon the existing posture of political affairs.

from the non-slaveholding States, and therefore rather promote than interpose to prevent a result so calamitous. We have hitherto disregarded the danger which such a state of feeling and such a course of action would indicate as most imminent, because we have assumed that such sentiments and action could only be attributed to a small minority of our Northern brethren. But now, when this sectional exasperation has been made available for the inauguration of a party calling itself Republican, under whose banner, for the first time in the history of the country, this sectional opposition to Southern rights and interests have united in nominating, with alleged probabilities of success, a purely sectional ticket for the Presidency and Vice Presidency of the United States, we can no longer shut our eyes to the reality of the threatened danger; we cannot but feel that the success of such a party would be the death knell of the Union. The unpatriotic purposes of this sectional party are but too manifest. Many of its supporters avow their object and purpose to be disunion, and have even gone so far in the madness of their fanaticism as to deprecate the flag of our country by obliterating from its constellation the fifteen stars which represent the slaveholding States, and displaying as their party banner that flag with but sixteen of its stars remaining, to represent the sixteen non-slaveholding States. It is manifest that those who disavow the object are not ignorant of the inevitable result.

The Whigs of Maryland, whom I have the honor to address, need no proof to convince them that calamitous consequences will flow from the success of this sectional party. They each and all know that the election of Mr. Fremont, and the administration of the Government by him upon the principles of his party, would necessarily occasion a dissolution of the Federal Union, to which they have been taught to look as the source of national strength and of individual prosperity and happiness.

I have known the Whigs of my State too long, I estimate their patriotism too highly, I have associated with them too intimately, to suppose it necessary for a moment to offer an argument to them in behalf of their country. They appreciate as fully as I could depict, the horrors of disunion; they will see the loss of national strength, the internal dissensions, the fatal check to civilization and freedom, the contempt of the world which would be the consequences of such a calamity. The Whigs of Maryland, which have followed the lead of such patriots as Clay and Webster, will never keep step to any other music than that of the Union.

are not only at liberty, but that as patriots we are bound, by every obligation to our country and posterity, to throw aside, on the one hand, the feelings of hostility which Mr. Fillmore's desertion of our party would be calculated to engender, and, on the other hand, to forget for the time our former battles with the Democratic party, and to ask ourselves but one question—*which of the two national organizations offers the best guarantee of success in crushing out of existence this new and monstrous sectional party, which threatens the life of our country?* I do not propose to examine the relative claims of the two national parties or their nominees to our support. It is not, in my judgment, permissible in the present crisis to interpose our individual differences of opinion upon minor questions. It is sufficient for us to know that the election of either national nominee would secure the Union; and the only question permitted by patriotism is, whether our support of the one or the other would more certainly prove successful?

But before I proceed to this inquiry, having shown that no political allegiance so far in the madness of their fanaticism as to deprecate the flag of our country by obliterating from its constellation the fifteen stars which represent the slaveholding States, and displaying as their party banner that flag with but sixteen of its stars remaining, to represent the sixteen non-slaveholding States. It is manifest that those who disavow the object are not ignorant of the inevitable result.

Every Maryland Whig will be bound by every tie of duty to vote as his judgment shall dictate this question. It may not be material to observe that neither of the national nominees will obtain throughout this broad land any votes which will not be cast by national conservative citizens, and it is to be regretted that in this crisis that vote should be divided between two national candidates, whilst the entire national vote will be concentrated upon the sectional nominee. To judge of the relative strength of the two national organizations it is unnecessary to trace minutely the origin of the American party. It is sufficient to bring your recollection that it was originally composed, North and South, of the dissatisfied members of the two old parties, and that in the North its original members were chiefly those who opposed the conservative principle upon the slavery question avowed in the platforms of the two old parties. It must not escape your recollection that upon the nomination of Messrs. Fillmore and Donelson a large majority of the Northern delegates seceded from the convention, declared their intention not to support those nominees, and subsequently united in the nomination of Mr. Fremont. This separation of the sectional from the national portion of the American party has occurred in every Northern State in the Confederacy. I deduce from these facts the nationality of the supporters of Messrs. Fillmore and Donelson, and I submit the inquiry for the honest decision of those to whom this paper is addressed, *whether, in such a State as ours, the national portion of the American party, the larger portion of its original strength, promise its nominees?*

Let the Whigs of Maryland ponder upon the view of this subject I have endeavored to present to their consideration, and no one of them will say that a single non-slaveholding State is certain for Fillmore and Donelson. Time, I think, will develop the fact that Messrs. Fillmore and Donelson will be left without an electoral ticket in most of the free States, and it is at any rate the deliberate conviction of my judgment that they will not carry a single non-slaveholding State in the Union. If I am right, or even approximate the truth in the view I have taken, it will necessarily follow that any conservative vote for the American nominees North will be equivalent to a vote for Mr. Fremont, as it will be a vote taken from Mr. Buchanan, his only real competitor.

It is clear, then, that to the South alone can the friends of Messrs. Fillmore and Donelson look for the probable chance of an electoral vote; and it is to the States of Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri that they profess to look with the greatest hope of success. It is manifest that if this hope were realized, it might indeed prevent the election of Messrs. Buchanan and Breckenridge by the people, but it would only throw the election of President into the present House of Representatives, composed as that House now is. Does not the election of this same House, after a contest of two months, of a Black Republican Speaker, admonish us of the danger of such an experiment? Who can doubt that our political fabric would be shaken to its very foundations by this election of President being thrown upon the present House of Representatives? On the other hand, is it not certain, beyond the contingency of a doubt, that the vote of the States indicated for Mr. Buchanan, when added to that of the other Southern States, would secure his election and the consequent safety of the Union? It is obvious that in this condition of the canvass, the only serious contest is that between Fremont and Buchanan; that the only possible result that the most sanguine of the friends of Fillmore and Donelson can hope to attain is to carry the contest into the House of Representatives. Who can conceive anything more fatal to the action, than such a course of conduct leading to such a result? Suppose Mr. Fillmore to reach the House of Representatives with the votes of four or five States, (his utmost possible strength) no man can seriously contend that he would be found elected President, and assuredly few will be found bold enough to assert that, under such circumstances, he ought to be. The only effect, then giving the electoral vote of any portion of the South to Mr. Fillmore would be to transfer the contest between Mr. Buchanan and Fremont from the hustings to the House of Representatives; and the danger to our country, now sufficiently menacing, would, in that event, be appalling indeed. Who can contemplate the occurrence of such a contingency, without feeling that he would be a traitor to his country, if he failed to exert every possible effort to avert so awful a calamity?

I deem it, then, to be my duty, as well as that of all who believe with me that the election of Fremont would be the death knell of the Union, to unite in the support of Messrs. Buchanan and Breckenridge; and I shall sustain their election to the best of my ability. Whilst I concede that there are certain principles hitherto professed by the party which nominated them that cannot receive our support, yet on the great issues of the constitutional rights of the South the platform on which they stand meets my cordial approval, and is in accordance with that of the party which I now address, and to whose kind favor I owe the honor of holding the seat I now occupy, and which I shall cease to hold after the 6th of March next by the fact of that party to which Mr. Fillmore has attached himself, and which is now dominant in the Legislature of my native State.

Let Maryland Whigs remember that the political battle now being fought in one of the deepest interests to them; that the maintenance of the constitutional rights of the South is the issue tendered to the American people by the Democratic party, and (as the Whigs have so candidly by their party done) that upon this issue the Republican party have staked the Union; and in such a battle, upon such an issue, they must be true to those who are doing battle in our behalf. It would be indeed sad if, in such a contest, the con-

servative strength of the country should not be united; it would be strange as sad if, in such a contest, Southern men should not be found battling shoulder to shoulder for the maintenance of their own constitutional rights.

In thus accomplishing what I believe to be a duty, I shall be inexpressibly gratified if I shall find myself sustained by the approval of my fellow-Whigs, who have refused to abandon either the party or the principles in support of which we have so long and so faithfully united, and which we shall remain at perfect liberty to reorganize as soon as our common efforts shall have succeeded in averting the perils that now threaten our beloved country.

THOMAS G. PRATT.

### AN ARMY OF MONKEYS.

A NOVEL SUSPENSION BRIDGE.—They are coming towards the bridge; they will most likely cross the rocks yonder," observed Raoul.

"How—swim it?" I asked. "It is a torrent there!" "Oh, no!" answered the Frenchman; "monkeys would rather go into fire than water. If they cannot leap the stream they will bridge it."

"Bridge it! and how?" "Stop a moment, Captain—you shall see. The half human voices now sounded nearer, and we could perceive that the animals were approaching the spot where we lay. Presently they appeared upon the opposite bank, headed by an old monkey chieftain, and followed like so many soldiers. They were as Raoul stated, of the *comadreja*, or ring-tailed tribe.

One—an aid-de-camp, or chief pioneer, perhaps—ran out upon the projecting rock, and, after looking across the stream as if calculating the distance, scampered back and appeared to communicate with the leader. This produced a movement in the troop. Commands were issued, and fatigue parties were detailed and marched to the front. Meanwhile several of the comadreas—engineers, no doubt—ran along the bank, examining the trees on both sides of the arroyo.

At length they all collected around a tall cotton wood, that grew over the narrowest part of the stream, and twenty or thirty of them scampered up its trunk. On reaching a high point, the foremost—a strong fellow—ran out upon a limb, and taking several turns of his tail around it, slipped off and hung his head downwards.

The next on the limb, also a stout one, climbed down the body of the first, and whipped his tail tightly round the neck and forearm of the latter, dropped off in turn, and hung head down. The third repeated this manoeuvre upon the second, and the fourth upon the third and so on, until the last one upon the string rested his forepaws upon the ground.

The living chain now commenced swinging backwards and forwards, like the pendulum of a clock. The motion was slight at first, but gradually increased, the lowermost monkey striking his hands violently on the earth as he passed the tangent and oscillating rapidly.

Several others upon the limbs above led the movement.

This continued until the monkey at the end of the chain was thrown among the branches of a tree on the opposite bank. Here, after two or three vibrations, he clutched a limb and held fast. This movement was executed adroitly, just at the culminating point of the oscillation, in order to save the intermediate links from the violence of a too sudden jerk.

The chain was now fast at both ends, forming a complete suspension bridge, over which the whole troop, to the number of four or five hundred, passed with the rapidity of thought.

manoeuvring, and another, and so on, until a dozen more were added to the string. Those last were all powerful fellows; and running to a high limb, the lifted the bridge into a position almost horizontal.

Then a scream from the last monkey of the new formation warned the tail end that all were ready; and the next moment the whole chain was swung over, and landed safely on the opposite bank. The lowermost links now dropped off like a melting candle, while the higher ones leaped to the branches and came down by the trunk. The whole troop then scampered off into the chapparal and disappeared.—*Reid's Adventures in South America.*

### A SAN FRANCISCO BALLOT-BOX.

We last week had an opportunity of examining a San Francisco ballot-box, made exactly after an original, as now in the hands of the Vigilance Committee. The material is cedar, and the size in the clear, about twelve inches by six, and six deep. The external appearance presents nothing remarkable to the eye of a hasty observer. It has a lock and key, and in many respects resembles the ordinary ballot-boxes used in the elections of Philadelphia. But the mysteries of this box, when fully explained make it capable of producing extraordinary results. In the first place, when looked at, and the key placed in the hands of some responsible person, it may be opened with perfect ease, by pressing upon the sides. In the second place, it has a false bottom, capable of concealing a large number of tickets, as well as a false side adapted to the same object. Thus, there are three deceptions connected with it, and all designed for fraudulent purposes. In the case of Casey, who some months since was elected to an office, it was not known on the day of election that he was a candidate at all. But his friends placed a suitable number of tickets in one of these fraudulent boxes, and thus when the polls were closed, he was, much to the astonishment of the uninitiated, reported as the successful candidate. This game has been going on for years. Hence the return of so many individuals of no character to lucrative and responsible offices. The people were at first perplexed, because they did not understand the matter; and when at last a discovery of these iniquitous frauds was made, the indignation became so intense, that the Committee of Vigilance was called upon to re-organize, and pursued the course that is already known. The box alluded to is now on its way to Washington, having been confided, for that purpose, to the hands of a gentleman of Philadelphia. Its accuracy, as compared with the original, is vouched for by six members of the Committee of Vigilance. The object is to show it to the officers of the National Government, in order that they may understand and appreciate the villainy that has so long been practiced at elections in California. It was manufactured by Mr. E. L. Fall of San Francisco.—*Pennsylvania Inquirer.*

### WHY WE SEE OPAQUE BODIES, OR SUCH AS ARE NOT LUMINOUS.

All bodies are seen by means of the rays of light, emanating or reflected from them; and therefore, when no light falls upon an opaque, it is invisible. This is the reason why none but luminous bodies can be seen in the dark. For the same reason, objects in the shade or in a darkened room appear indistinct, while those which are exposed to a strong light can scarcely be seen. We see the things around us, when the sun does not shine directly upon them, solely by means of reflected light. Everything on which it shines directly, reflects a portion of its rays in all possible directions, and it is by means of this reflected light that we are enabled to see the objects around us in the daytime which are not in the direct rays of the sun. It is also entirely owing to the reflection of the atmosphere that the heavens appear bright in the day-time. If the atmosphere had no reflective power, only that part would be luminous in which the sun is placed; and, on turning our back to the sun, the whole heavens would appear as dark as in the night; we should have no twilight, but a sudden transition from the brightest sunshine to darkness, immediately upon the setting of the sun.—*Foster's Philosophy.*

Many a true heart, that would have come back like a dove to the ark after its first transgression, has been frightened and bayonetted by the angry look and menace—the taunt, the savage character of an unforgiving spirit.